



STRATEGIES XXI

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

THE COMPLEX AND DYNAMIC NATURE OF THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

February 27, 2025

The 24th edition of the CDSSS “STRATEGIES XXI” *International Scientific Conference* took place as a hybrid event on February 27, 2025. This esteemed academic forum serves as a platform for exchanging ideas, sharing perspectives, and presenting advanced research in the fields of security, strategy, and the contemporary military studies. It also aims to foster a culture of strategic and security awareness, encourage engagement with experts from the National Defence, Public Order, and National Security System (SNAOPSN), and strengthen scientific collaboration both nationally and internationally.

This year’s edition brought together prominent experts, researchers, and practitioners to address current security challenges and emerging threats, focusing on a range of topics including:

- *Security and defence policies in the new strategic environment;*
- *Concepts and theories in security and defence;*
- *Hybrid threats in today’s security environment - state and non-state actors amid great power rivalries;*
- *Impact of climate change on national security;*
- *The Russia - Ukraine war: shaping future security and defence policy – The Indo-Pacific region and U.S.;*
- *China rivalry – tensions and crises in the Middle East – security trends in the Caucasus and Central Asia;*
- *Security environment developments in Africa;*
- *Strategic scenarios – prospective studies on security and defence.*

The conference had the honour of hosting distinguished keynote speakers who offered strategic insights from the evolving security dynamics.



Panel 1, titled ***Contemporary Crises and International Security***, featured discussions on a range of critical topics, such as *military manpower - a new challenge for the European states - possible solutions for Romania; Romania's role in NATO's evolving strategic posture; analysis of Eurasian geopolitical shifts and their impact on European security; emerging security threats in the Black Sea region*, among others. These subjects were addressed by:

- Dan-Florin GRECU, PhD, Major General (Ret.), President of the Association of Reserve Officers from Romania;
- Emilian CHIREA, PhD, Brigadier General, Deputy Military Representative of Romania to NATO and the EU;
- Antonia COLIBĂȘANU, PhD, Assoc. Prof., from Geopolitical Futures and the Foreign Policy Research Institute, Romania;
- Răzvan BUZATU, PhD, expert in strategic affairs.

Panel 2, titled ***Emergent Technologies as a Game Changer in Contemporary Global Competition***, fostered a dynamic and engaging scientific dialogue. The panel featured insightful contributions from:

- Stelian CRISTEA, Deputy Director of the Romanian National Cyber Security Directorate;
- Ștefan CANTARAGIU, PhD, Brigadier General (Ret.), Vice-President of the Association of Reserve Officers from Romania and Corresponding Member of the Romanian Academy of Scientists;
- Andrei PĂUN, PhD, Professor, Director of the “Mihai Drăgănescu” Institute for Artificial Intelligence Research (ICIA), Romania;
- Cristian SFICHI, Regional Director for Ukraine, Romania, and the Caucasus at Thales Group – Conference Sponsor.
- Mario MARINOV, PhD, Researcher at the University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, Bulgaria.

The discussions centered on the evolving role of cyber operations on the security environment – the integration of Human-Technology interaction to enhance multi-domain operations; the strategic role of cyberspace in regional conflicts; the transformative impact of disruptive technologies (such as Artificial Intelligence and Quantum technology, etc.) in reconfiguring spheres of influence in a geopolitical context; the potential of emerging and disruptive technologies as enablers for advanced military capabilities; the threats and risks associated with integrating disruptive technologies into defence systems and their implications on national security; convergent and divergent trends in military technology developments – military cooperation; and the concept of human augmentation, exploring the boundary between myth and reality.

A special session was also dedicated to the Conference Sponsor, Thales Group, showcasing the company's contributions to cutting-edge defence technologies, cybersecurity, and AI-powered military solutions;



The scientific event included a presentation of the *Integrated Educational Infrastructures for Intelligent Learning - 4EDU* project, funded through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), Component C15 – Education¹. The project is coordinated by Colonel Assoc. Prof. Florin Popescu, PhD, who delivered a lecture on *Digital Architectural Frameworks Designed for Civil and Military Applications*. In addition, two books were presented during the event:

- *The Impact of Climate Change on Romania's National Security (Impactul Schimbărilor Climatice asupra Securității Naționale a României)*. The book presents a series of analyses conducted by the authors across key areas and dimensions of national security, utilising a structured analytical model. The findings and conclusions provide insight into the current state and projected developments regarding the influence of climate change on Romania's national security.

- *Operational Design: Applying Operational Art in the Operations Planning Process (Designul Operațional: Aplicarea Artei Operative în Procesul de Planificare a Operațiilor)* offers an in-depth and dynamic exploration of the role of art in the military field. The book explores how the essential components of operational design

¹ The implementation of Component 15 is overseen by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Administration and the Ministry of European Investments and Projects.

are developed and applied to support the commander's decision-making process, while also functioning as a practical tool to support the operational planning cycle.



Event photo: *4EDU Project: - Digital Architectural Frameworks
Designed for Civil and Military Applications*

Books: • *The Impact of Climate Change on Romania's National Security;*
• *Operational Design: Applying Operational Art in the Operations Planning Process*

The conference showcased significant contributions from distinguished academics and professionals from Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, and the Czech Republic. The presentations spanned a broad array of contemporary topics, addressing key issues such as geopolitical rivalries, radicalization, cybersecurity, military strategies, and hybrid threats:

• ***Motives, Mechanisms and Map of Far-Right Radicalisation in Europe. Myths and Sociological Confirmations*** – Iulian CHIFU, PhD, Prof.; Cosmin GRIGORE, PhD Candidate, Center for Conflict Prevention and Early Warning (CPCEW), Romania

• ***Trump's Second Term and Us-China Rivalry: Geopolitical Implications*** – Mădălin ENESCU, PhD; Ana Maria FLOREA, PhD Candidate, National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Romania

• ***Holding the Line: American Military Diplomatic Actions in the Sinosphere in the Context of the Second Cold War*** – Mihai VLAICU, University of Craiova, Romania

• ***Russia: A Terrorist State and Sponsor of Terrorism*** – Iulian-Constantin MĂNĂILESCU, PhD Candidate, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Police Academy, Romania



• ***The Russian-Ukrainian War and its Geopolitical Implications*** – Eugen SITEANU, PhD, Colonel (Ret.), Prof. Eng., Academy of Romanian Scientists, Romania; Eng. Iulian TOADER, PhD Candidate, “Carol I” National Defence University, Romania

• ***National Security Imperatives and The Challenge of Civilian-Defence Cybersecurity Integration in the European Union*** – Niculae IANCU, PhD, Maritime Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence, Constanța Maritime University, Romania

• ***The Third and the Fourth Departments of the People’s Liberation Army and Cyber Threats*** - Alida Monica Doriana BARBU, PhD, PhD Candidate, “Babes-Bolyai” University, Romania

• ***Challenges at National Level Regarding Enhanced Military Mobility Capacity in the Framework of Implementing the Multi-Domain Operations Concept*** – Ionela Cătălina MANOLACHE, PhD Candidate, “Carol I” National Defence University, Romania

• ***Evolution of the Strategic Rocket Forces of the Russian Federation in the Post-Cold War Era; Precision Glide Munitions. Methods for Effective Counteraction Based on the Conflict in Ukraine*** – Mario MARINOV, PhD, Researcher, University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, Bulgaria

• ***Pager Explosions in Lebanon – Impact on Regional and International Security*** – Lyubosvet STOEV, PhD, Assoc. Prof.; Zhivo PETROV, Colonel, PhD, Assoc. Prof., “Georgi Stoykov Rakovski” National Defense College, Bulgaria

• ***Drones – A Threat to Security?*** – Ana-Raluca STAN, PhD, CDSSS, “Carol I” National Defence University, Romania

• ***National Ideal and National Interests Linked by the National Strategy*** – Grudi Ivanov ANGELOV, PhD, Major General (Ret.), Assoc. Prof., University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, Bulgaria

• ***Strategic Coordination, Institutional Fragmentation and Policy Challenges in Governing Romania’s National Security*** – Niculae IANCU, PhD, Maritime Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence, Constanta Maritime University, Romania

• ***Hungary’s Transformation from Security Consumer to Provider within NATO*** – Faragó BENEC, PhD Candidate, National University of Public Service (NUPS), Hungary

• ***Narratives in the Czech Society Regarding the War in Ukraine*** – Libor FRANK, PhD, Assistant Professor, Centre for Security and Military Strategic Studies, University of Defence, Czech Republic

• ***The New NATO Policy on Reserves. A Romanian Project to Implement It*** – Crăişor-Constantin IONIȚĂ, PhD, Brigadier General (Ret.), Researcher, CDSSS, “Carol I” National Defence University, Romania; Elena-Adriana BRUMARU, PhD Candidate, “Alexandru cel Bun” Military Academy, Republic of Moldova



• ***Challenges of Illegal Migration in the Context of Romania's Accession to the Schengen Area*** – Emanuel Sebastian GEORGESCU, PhD Candidate, “Carol I” National Defence University, Romania

• ***Weaponization of Religion as one of the Main Hybrid Instruments Directed Against Romanians in the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Romania*** – Matei BLĂNARU, PhD Candidate, University of Bucharest, Romania

• ***Disinformation and Its Threats to Economic Security: The Impact of False Rumors on Financial Markets and Global Economic Stability*** – George Gabriel NISTORESCU PhD, Deputy Police Commissioner National Anticorruption Directorate, Romania; Vasile Cătălin GOLOP, PhD, Police Commissioner, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Police Academy, Romania

• ***Recent International Security Crises – Conceptual Framework and Empirical Insights*** – Mirela ATANASIU, PhD, Senior Researcher, CDSSS, “Carol I” National Defence University, Romania

• ***Methodological Debates and Great Power Identity*** – Mihai ZODIAN, PhD, Researcher, CDSSS, “Carol I” National Defence University, Romania

• ***A Theoretical Approach to Understanding Security Culture and Its Impact on National Security*** – Alexandra SARCINSCHI, PhD, Senior Researcher, CDSSS, “Carol I” National Defence University, Romania

• ***Considerations on the Causes of Climate Change and the Scientific Consensus Regarding Anthropogenic Factors*** – Daniela LICĂ, PhD, Researcher, CDSSS, “Carol I” National Defence University, Romania

• ***Building Urban Security in Climate Change Context*** – Sorina-Georgiana RUSU, PhD, Lect. Habil. Urb. Mil. Sc., “Ion Mincu” University of Architecture and Urban Planning, Romania.

The conference papers will be published in the Conference Proceedings, which are indexed in international databases including EBSCO, PROQUEST, and CEEOL. They will also be publicly accessible on the CDSSS website at <https://cssas.unap.ro/en/books.htm> and on the International Scientific Conference STRATEGIES XXI website at <https://strategii21.ro/index.php/en/conference-proceedings>



Event photo: *STRATEGIES XXI International Scientific Conference*
The complex and dynamic nature of the security environment

This year's conference highlighted the complex and ever-changing nature of security challenges, emphasizing the critical need for interdisciplinary collaboration and strategic foresight in tackling global threats. It marked a significant milestone in the scientific calendar of "Carol I" National Defence University and Centre for Defence and Security Strategic Studies, offering an academic forum for in-depth strategic discussion.

Raluca STAN, PhD*

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